

a practical resource
for Lutheran
church musicians

in tempo

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Life-Giving Spaces: That's What Choirs Do

*O come, let us sing to the Lord;
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;
let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!
For the Lord is a great God and a great king above all gods.
... O come, let us worship and bow down;
let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!
For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture
and the sheep of his hand.*

—Psalm 95: 1–3, 6–7a; NRSV

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Life-Giving Spaces, continued on page 3

I pray that we musicians can be agents in the re-creation process for those who are led into, or back into, Christ's church, through our music and our leading liturgy.

in tempo

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Featured interview: Carl Schalk

Hymnal Abbreviations:

CW93: *Christian Worship* (1993)

CW21: *Christian Worship* (2021)

ELW: *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

LBW: *Lutheran Book of Worship*

LSB: *Lutheran Service Book*

From the editor

Linda Borecki



My all-time favorite quote is on hope, emerging from theologian David F. Ford's reflection' on God showing up in response to Job's cries of godforsakenness:

“The resonances between Job’s opening monologue and the whirlwind speeches continue especially through [Job] chapters 38-39, and the overall effect is to give a vivid, positive and overwhelming response to Job’s despairing cry. ... It is as if an almost unthinkable hope can only be suggested by a delicate opening up of the imagination through reworking the very images that had earlier powerfully expressed despair.”

The last issue of *In Tempo* (2023, no. 3) tackled the hard topic of the abuse of church musicians. Diane Belcher articulated the problem and scope and offered practical suggestions for church workers; Paul Linnemann offered wisdom and encouragement. I have had a lingering sense of *but what else will help those who feel “godforsaken” and bring about healing in the body of Christ?*

A partial answer seemed to come as this issue’s articles began arriving. I noticed a *golden thread*, a recurring theme, among contributors: reworking images in worship that open one’s imagination to the God of healing and transformation. Lois Martin re-envision the church choir as a place of unconditional acceptance and encouragement. Carla Waterman invites us to slow down and take in the imagery of an unresting, unhasting God responsive to our deepest needs. Wallace Horton points to expecting to meet God in worship with Christ’s life-changing power. Grace Hennig suggests psalm settings that especially reflect the Spirit at work in us. Jacqueline Bencke shares how Japanese and Western worshippers rework and enlarge an understanding of “sacred” music.

And here’s another opening up of the imagination that we all get to contribute to and receive: hope after trauma at the communion rail. We are invited into the Lord’s Supper, which is “meet, right, and *salutary*”—beneficial, healing. Every eucharist is God *showing up* for us.

I want to be careful not to tell people wounded in or by a church that they *will* find healing in the institution that was the setting for abuse. But I can pray that Jesus would take sacred things and actions that have been profaned and somehow *re-create* them. And I pray that we musicians can be agents in the re-creation process for those who are led into, or back into, Christ’s church, through our music and our leading liturgy. And pray that our own eyes be opened wider to see God’s vivid, positive, overwhelming *showing up* to kindle an unthinkable hope. Blessings on your reading and leading and imagining.

Endnote

1. David F. Ford, *Christian Wisdom: Desiring God and Learning in Love* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 109.

Life-Giving Spaces,

continued from page 1

by Lois Martin

Recently, after worship when people were gathered in conversations, I overheard the choir director exclaim, “That’s what choirs do!” I wondered what it was that choirs did that caused such an exuberant acclamation. I drifted toward the conversation because I was curious about this choir, not just the acclamation. I asked about the choir and the composition of its members, the professionalism of the group as it sang in the chancel, very visible from the pew. I was given a smile by the director as he continued with his praises for the choir members and his welcome invitation to join them. I was curious for myself to know where I might fit in with this choir that sounds professional in its beautiful musical offerings.

I was also curious about membership because I knew of a new member who had been recently welcomed into the choir. The new member seemed to have been given exceptional grace by all, not just by the director. The new member did not read music and did not exactly appear like other members. But this new member was elated to be in the choir and sit up front with them on a Sunday morning, to be part of the choir, to sing God’s praises in thanksgiving, to be accepted and belong. Other choir members knew of the abundant grace offered to all members by the director. There was always acceptance, not auditions, always patience and guidance, not scowls and critique. I was happy to hear about this abundant grace because I no longer appear exactly like everyone else.

There was always acceptance, not auditions, always patience and guidance, not scowls and critique. I was happy to hear about this abundant grace.

I was told that another member of the choir volunteered to give voice lessons and help those who do not read music. New members are welcomed by everyone and given opportunity that increases the joy of singing with the group. There is no trial period or a “wait and see if you’re good enough” provisional acceptance. When I thanked the director for the invitation to me and for including new members in the choir with grace and kindness, he told me, “That’s what choirs do.” I heard it again.

Church musicians, directors, singers, instrumentalists—all who plan for good liturgy, for good worship—deserve much more praise and thanksgiving than they are given. They are called by God to give their talents in praise and thanksgiving to God. Whether they are paid or volunteer, it is the service to God that draws them and their gifts of music to be faithful week after week. They are called by God to be a witness within the larger body of the church, a witness to God’s glory and God’s faithfulness. There are no designer models of musicians who are acceptable in churches: God does not have a designer mold for the ideal child of God.

Life-Giving Spaces,

continued on page 4

Letter to the Editor

David’s Harp

Thank you for your important article “The ‘David’s Harp, Saul’s Spear’ Project,” which powerfully speaks to the hurt and pain so many church musicians suffer as victims of dysfunctional churches and abusive leaders. I would only add that often the families of church musicians are collateral damage when church musicians are targeted. When my husband went through his own traumatic experience of abuse, he was not alone in his suffering. Our whole family, including our two school-age children, lost our faith community, our friends, and trust in churches and pastors. Even a few years after his awful experience, we are still learning to trust churches and their leadership and recover the belief they are safe places for our family.

Elizabeth Dollhopf-Brown

Hanover, NH

In Tempo welcomes letters to the editor. We reserve the right to edit for space and clarity. Please send to intempo@alcm.org.



Grace Lutheran Church choir, State College, PA, Nathan Glocke (far right), director

Why do we make musical offerings in church?

Why do we sing in church? Are we singing as a person in the pew or person in the choir or as a presider chanting and singing God's praises? Does our spirit come alive as we play an instrument or as a soloist or a member of a choir or small group? Does the harmonious music we make contribute to our spirit and allow us to transcend the space in which we find ourselves? Is it for perfection, to present a perfect performance for the "audience" in the pew at a worship service? Do we want to be "the best in town" and promote our church as the church to belong to because it is so good, especially the music? Is music-making only an aural and visible event? Or is music a spiritual event, praising and giving God the glory? What would happen if only the most exact and perfect music was given at every worship service? Maybe no music would happen.

Does one make music for God? Do our musical gifts enhance the

Choir members knew of the abundant grace offered to all members by the director. There was always acceptance, not auditions, always patience and guidance, not scowls and critique.

worship setting? Does the music provide a vehicle and a path for the spirit to engage with the Spirit for both those who listen and those who provide the music? Or is it entertainment for the sake of performance? Who decides? Who critiques? Who is worthy to belong, who do we exclude?

As a church musician and pastor, now retired and sitting in the pew, I am quite aware of the choir, of all the musical offerings, and I am aware of my own spiritual enrichment because of the music they provide. Music, whether vocal or instrumental, text or notes, has a long history in the word of God with Christians, with the Lutheran church, and

with those who are in the pews. Music in the church is about people, both those making the music and—especially—those hearing and receiving the music ultimately given for God.

What is different about having a worship experience with live musicians, live presiders, live in-the-pew people?

What happens to our spiritual, emotional, psychological, physical being when we are in worship with others? How was it during the pandemic when many people worshipped at home on Zoom or listened and watched on live-streaming? Many church members still worship by these means. For some it has been a spiritual gift as they are no longer able to attend church in person. For others, it fulfills needs. For others, it has become habit.

When we engage with others in a real-time setting, with live choirs, with live musicians, it is

Music in the church is about people, both those making the music and—especially—those hearing and receiving the music ultimately given for God.

possible to experience and be moved beyond ourselves, to feel accepted, to experience the love of God from those around us who also feel accepted, valued, loved by God and each other. That is not to say these feelings cannot be experienced at home or with a pull-down screen in the sanctuary, but it is to invite examining the contrast of being among people, greeting them with real-time smiles, inquiring about their lives, their work, their burdens.

Music, and the musicians whose talent and craft present for us God's living word in text and tune, offers to us a unique life-giving, life-sustaining opportunity as we worship our Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The prophets and kings of our Holy Scripture knew this, Jesus knew this as he used these sacred texts, and the early Christians knew it as they gathered in word and song. Martin Luther knew it; J. S. Bach knew it. We know it. The choir director mentioned above also knew it: not every choir

When we engage with others in a real-time setting, with live choirs, with live musicians, it is possible to experience and be moved beyond ourselves, to feel accepted, to experience the love of God from those around us who also feel accepted, valued, loved by God and each other.

member is the same, not every choir member is perfect in pitch, timing, vocal ability, physical ability, but every choir member is a valued child of God, sings praises, and joins in the acceptance of the love of God in Jesus our Christ.

That *is* what choirs do.



Lois Martin is a now-retired ordained minister of the ELCA. She has served our Lord as

organist, choir director, and music director before becoming ordained to word and sacrament ministry. She is also a spiritual director and enjoys teaching and writing, particularly on



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Scripture. Her doctoral emphasis was spiritual care at Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (PA), now part of United Lutheran Seminary.

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favorite anthems of great conductors **Elisabeth Cherland**

I'm a fourth-generation conductor and church musician. Some of my favorite anthems have been inherited by blood, and others have made their way into my heart through meaningful encounters and experiences. Faced with the daunting task of choosing favorites, I set some boundaries to help narrow down the possibilities. In recent years I have worked to diversify the composers represented in my programs. This journey has resulted in finding some true gems. What follows are some of my favorite anthems by composers of color or from a Black tradition. Each of these pieces is accessible, offers depth, beautifully expresses a text, and brings joy.

“Ascribe to the Lord.” Rosephanye Powell; SATB, SAB, SSAA, or TTBB, piano; Epiphany (Baptism of Our Lord), baptism, confirmation, festivals; text is a setting of Psalm 29:1-4.

One of the pleasures of teaching at Gustavus Adolphus College (2019–22) was conducting the Lucia Singers, a treble choir. There is an abundance of treble choir literature that is slow and lyrical, but it can be difficult to find fast, rhythmic, powerful pieces. “Ascribe to the Lord” is the strong piece for treble choir that I often hope to find. Its rhythmic

drive is set in the piano introduction, and Powell makes the simple melody and harmonies interesting by contrasting unison sections with voice pairings, echoing, and layering. The choir and I used the repetition of text as an opportunity to experiment with expansive language for God. We chose to vary “worship Him” with “worship Her” and “worship Them” on additional stanzas, and this process sparked great discussions. This piece can be learned quickly and will be a favorite of singers and listeners alike.

“We Shall Walk through the Valley.” Undine Smith Moore; SATB, a cappella; Lent, general; beautiful companion to Psalm 23.

The heart of this setting is the beautiful melody and imagery. By letting the tune and text of the traditional spiritual remain simple, Moore directly touches the soul. In the fall of 2020, while firmly under the weight of COVID-19 and reeling from the murder of George Floyd just sixty-six miles from our campus, the Gustavus Chapel Choir and I struggled to connect and make music together. Learning and singing Moore’s setting was a balm for our bodies and souls. The reassurance and love this piece provides is moving.



“See That Star!” Victor Johnson; SATB, a cappella; Christmas, Epiphany.

I first encountered Johnson’s work when teaching middle and high school music in South Dakota. The beginning of this work quotes the spiritual “Behold That Star,” and it then moves into upbeat, original, and strophic material. A soloist or small group leads the call and response, and—as with many of Johnson’s works—this piece comes together quickly. It’s energetic, joyful, and fun. My students at Minnesota State University call it “a banger” and assure me this is a great compliment!

“Ukuthula.” Traditional Zulu hymn. Arr. Andre van der Merwe or Karl Benzing; SATB, a cappella; Lent, communion, general.

The word “ukuthula” means “peace,” and the remaining text of this Zulu Gospel hymn translates to “in this broken world of trouble, the blood of Jesus flowed so that you could have peace.” The six stanzas name redemption, praise, faith, victory, comfort, and peace. Though SATB, this call-and-response hymn led by a soloist or small group is accessible for church choirs of any size. I used “Ukuthula” as a touchstone piece in my first doctoral recital at the University of Washington and crafted sections of music around each stanza topic. Between each segment we returned to the hymn, and by the end of the performance everyone in the room sang it together.

“Bambelela.” Traditional South African song. Arr. Mairi Munro, Martine Stemerick, and Philip Jakob; also in *Singing Our Prayer*¹; SAB or SATB, leader, a cappella; general.

“Bambelela” is an eight-measure, one-word refrain set for three voice parts and leader, and please believe me when I say it could be the most powerful choral experience you bring to your singers and congregation this year. The song is ideally taught by ear, one voice part at a time. The word “bambelela” means “never give up” or “hold on” in the Xhosa language. There is speculation that it was sung during the South African apartheid years by those riding the dangerously overcrowded trains and literally holding on for their lives.



I’ll never forget teaching the voice parts of “Bambelela” to the volunteer pick-up choir at Holden Village (the Lutheran retreat center in Lake Chelan, WA) one Friday and then leading the community in singing it an hour later during the evening service. Despite (or perhaps because of) having no written notation, the congregation couldn’t help but sing well, and the choir members sitting in their midst supported them until everyone was confident. I hope you try this gem in your context.

These works are certainly not exhaustive of all the wonderful sacred literature by composers of color or from a Black tradition, but I have found them to be wonderful and well worth encountering. There’s always room for more favorites!



Elisabeth Cherland is a choral conductor as well as professor, singer, song leader, violinist, and Lutheran church musician. She is director of choral activities at Minnesota State University,

Mankato, MN. Cherland earned a DMA in choral conducting at the University of Washington (Seattle), an MMed with certification degree from VanderCook College of Music (Chicago, IL), and a BA in music and English from Concordia College (Moorhead, MN). Her research interests include women in academia, feminist and narrative research, choral settings of Emily Dickinson poetry, song leading and paperless music pedagogy, social justice in the choral classroom, and the effects of corporate singing on mental health.

Photos courtesy the author.

Endnote

1. *Singing Our Prayer: A Companion to Holden Prayer around the Cross*, comp. and ed. Tom Witt (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2010).

Lost Found in Translation

Contextual Challenges, Universal Insights, Part 1

*There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over all, does not cry: mine!*¹

—Abraham Kuyper

by Jacqueline Bencke

This quote was spoken by the late Abraham Kuyper, former Prime Minister of the Netherlands, in his 1880 address at the inauguration of the Free University at Amsterdam. It effectively introduces this discussion about hymnody and worship music in Japan, where I have worked for eighteen years as a missionary for the ELCA. I serve as a “musicianary”—a mission-minded musician—at a small college and within the local church community. The Japanese context for Christian music presents some unique challenges that require one to step into the worship context with sensitivity.

Hidden Christians and Early Missions

After an initial engagement with Christianity in the late 1500s, Japan banned Christianity in 1614, which meant that those Christians who were not executed for their faith were forced underground. With no priest to lead Mass, Japanese Christians

over the next generations were forced to try and worship on their own in deep secret until the legal proscription against Christianity was lifted in 1873. During this time, secret Christian worship largely consisted of attempts to recite or chant the Mass as they had learned it (in Latin and Portuguese) from the Jesuit missionaries.

Meanwhile in Europe and North America, between 1600 and 1860—almost the same years during which Christianity was banned in Japan—the Christian West was undergoing significant transformation in its development of sacred music. From Palestrina to Bach, and from psalmody to hymnody, the expansion of the church’s song all transpired while Japanese Christians remained deeply hidden in remote places.

The arrival of Protestant missionaries in Japan in the 1880s meant that it was primarily the most recent hymns of the mid-1800s that were introduced, along with the cultural and metaphorical language imbued within them. However, transliterations of hymns into Japanese were difficult to create due to a wide gap in metaphorical language. For example, how does one translate “a sacrificial Lamb of God” when there is no historical or cultural precedent for sacrificing animals for religious purification? Or, when the word used for “sin” is the



Information is provided for passersby to learn about the activities of the church.

same Japanese character as the character for “crime,” how does one poetically sculpt that term into Japanese lyrics?

Helping emerging churches develop their song to glorify God requires worship leaders to consider what embedded meaning the melodies, harmonies, or instruments already hold for that community/culture/nation/generation. What metaphors already exist within a culture that can help new believers or those seeking to understand the gospel more abundantly? What cautions must be taken if there is potential for misrepresentation of religious significance? In Japan, for example, the *taiko* drum, the *koto*, and the *shamisen* were instruments used in Shinto pantheistic worship and Buddhist ceremonies. Even now, missionaries in Japan continue to wrestle with the question, “How appropriate is it to use those instruments for twenty-first-century Christian worship?”

How does one translate “a sacrificial Lamb of God” when there is no historical or cultural precedent for sacrificing animals for religious purification?



Contextualized Worship: Practical Insights for North American Worship Leaders

I work in three different contexts where these questions about words, metaphors, melodies, and instruments have been put to the test in real life contexts:

- a primarily expat congregation,
- a Japanese Lutheran congregation, and
- a Japanese Lutheran college.

Each of these contexts requires music leaders to find ways to adapt the available resources to meet the needs of the people. Worship in Japan can seem far removed from North American contexts. However, I encourage readers to notice familiar themes and challenges that can apply to worship in any context where ecumenism, inter-generational worship, addressing the spiritual needs of non-Christians, and appropriate instrumentation are part of your conversations. To

begin this three-part series, let's delve into the first scenario: an interdenominational and international congregation.

International Worship: Heart Languages, Melodies, and Instruments

The Kumamoto International Service is where expats from different countries and denominations gather on Sunday nights for worship. Several Japanese people who became Christians while overseas also attend regularly. Many of the expats live in Kumamoto for work or graduate school, so the assembly is fluid. The leaders of worship, therefore, must always have their finger on the pulse of which heart languages, denominational backgrounds, and cultural sensitivities might exist.

Although the liturgy is Lutheran, as are the worship leaders, sometimes the leaders are the only Lutherans among those who are gathered. Worship leaders take the time to approach new visitors

A Tanzanian couple's daughter was baptized at Kumamoto Lutheran Church in a tri-lingual service (English, Kiswahili, and Japanese).

with curiosity and a genuine desire to find what hymns both serve the word and allow God to speak to our hearts. We create community by singing hymns in Japanese, Indonesian, Shona, Swahili, or other languages and styles represented by the people in regular attendance.

Leaders ask newcomers such questions as these: are there familiar hymns that we could try singing a verse or two in your language to help you feel more at home? Are there new hymns from your home country that could be introduced and utilized in this worship community? Maybe there are

**We create community
by singing hymns
in ... languages and
styles represented by
the people in regular
attendance.**



Kumamoto Lutheran Church, est. 1888, is among the first Lutheran churches built in Japan.



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some instruments that would give a familiar hymn some new texture or flavor. We have worshipped by listening to “Amazing Grace” performed on a Japanese koto, and we have sung it a cappella with a West African djembe. Each arrangement brings a freshness to accompany our (sometimes tired) voices. Because trying new languages or songs can sometimes be uncomfortable, creating song sheets or spending a few minutes before worship introducing pronunciation can be helpful—and fun!

Ecumenical worship serves an important role as we live out the Great Co-Mission. Not only are we to proclaim the gospel to those who have never heard it but we are also commanded to nurture fellow believers through psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Drawn together from many cultural and denominational backgrounds, we can affirm our faith together and be strengthened into union with the Holy Spirit and one another.

Next issue: Discover some of the challenges and joys of worship music in a Japanese congregation.



Jacqueline Bencke lives in Kumamoto, Japan, where she has served as an ELCA missionary

and ethnodoxologist for almost twenty years. Her degrees include an MA in music education and international education and a PhD in Christian worship. She and her husband, Patrick, work at Kyushu Lutheran College and provide support for music ministries for several Lutheran congregations in the area.

Photos courtesy the author.

Endnote

1. Abraham Kuyper, in *Abraham Kuyper: A Centennial Reader*, ed. James D. Bratt (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 488.

Worship: The Hub of Spiritual Transformation

Be transformed by the renewing of your minds.

—Romans 12:2; NRSV

by Wallace W. Horton

Worship leaders, planners, and participants spend a lot of time thinking about what occurs in worship. They have hopes, dreams, and expectations regarding both the content and the end result. Each is hopeful that the pastor will have a strong message, that the choir will sing well, and that there are no surprises that might detract from the carefully planned service. Pastors and musicians will likely feel that it has been a good morning of worship if those things occur and no one comes up after the service to register a complaint or give a negative opinion.

In coming to that conclusion, I am reminded of two songs that were popular in the 1960s and 1970s: “Is That All There Is?” and “What’s It All About, Alfie?” If all that we look for in worship is to keep things running smoothly and avoiding negative comments, we are missing the mark.

Editor’s Note: *This is a reprint of an essay with the same name from the book by Horton titled Windows on Worship: 52 Devotional Readings for Those Who Lead, Plan, and Engage in Worshiping God (Norman, OK: Nurturing Faith, 2021); used with permission.*



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Several years ago I was asked to speak at a neighboring church on the topic of worship. During the morning break a man came up to me and shared his reasons why he attended church: he wanted (1) to see his friends and (2) to hear a “good sermon.” He told me that he usually achieved his first objective, but that he rarely achieved the second. Then he proceeded into an editorial tirade about the sermons of the pastor, who was also present that morning. When an opportune time allowed me to interject a response, I suggested to the man that it would probably be appropriate for him to share his concerns with the pastor. One can imagine where the conversation went from there!

My purpose in mentioning this episode is to highlight the misunderstanding that worship is “about us.” Rather, worship is about God. It is also important to keep in mind that through the preaching of the Word, sacraments and ordinances, the sacred actions of worship, and the prayers of the people, God’s power is present to change us when we participate in Christian worship regardless of

Worship is about God... God’s power is present to change us when we participate in Christian worship regardless of our tradition. Christian worship conveys life-changing power.

our tradition. Christian worship conveys life-changing power.

At one of the churches where I served, we used the phrase, “Worship is the hub of spiritual transformation.” We are reminded in 2 Corinthians 3:18 that when we behold the “glory of the Lord” with an “unveiled face,” we are transformed. When we meet Jesus in worship, we are changed. Spiritual transformation can, and does, take place in worship when we meet God in a personal and powerful way.

Do you expect to be different when you leave worship than when you arrived? Expectation is an important part of worship. When we expect to meet God in worship, we can be, and are, changed. God’s life-changing power is present and waiting to meet us.

God bless you in your worship!



Wallace W. Horton, DWS, is a director on the ALCM board and a musician and writer at home in Fairfax, VA.

This Far by Faith

25th Anniversary of the Ground-Breaking African American Lutheran Hymnal, Part 1

Editor's Note: Celebrating *This Far by Faith* in a three-part series, *In Tempo* is sharing not only some of the hymnal's history but also suggested performance practices from the hymnal itself. May you find both inspiration and practical wisdom for incorporating African American music in your local congregation.

Historical Note¹

The 1978 publication of *Lutheran Book of Worship* was the first primary Lutheran hymnal to include African American spirituals.² The Gospel songs and spirituals included in *Songs of Zion* (1981), a pioneering resource published by the United Methodist Church, served as a helpful

Many of the principles of African American music performance are polar opposites of standard European American musical practices.

supplemental resource in many Black Lutheran congregations, but also as a hopeful sign of what was possible within predominantly white denominations in the United States.

This Far by Faith was prompted by a concept paper authored by African Americans within The Lutheran Church—Missouri

Synod in 1990. The project soon became a partnership with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Concerns raised by some in the LCMS, however, led to *TFBF* not being officially endorsed by the LCMS. Despite this, it has gained widespread use in both the LCMS and the ELCA which published it.

This Far by Faith was designed uniquely to serve alongside a primary hymnal. Besides eighteen psalms, various pieces of service music, and 264 hymns, it includes three full liturgical settings (with original music by Tillis Butler and James Capers), eucharistic prayers, blessings, and rites of



As a music whose foundation rests in the oral rather than a written tradition, African American Gospel choirs typically learn new repertoire by rote.

passage derived from communities within the African diaspora, including the Caribbean.

Leading African American Song³

For many church musicians, especially those with predominant classical training, developing proficiency in African American music may pose a great challenge; after all, many of the principles of African American music performance are polar opposites of standard European American musical practices. The first and perhaps biggest challenge is coming to terms with the role of the musical score in African American music. In Western music, the score reigns supreme; for the most part, performers are expected to adhere to tempo and dynamic markings. Beyond that, tampering with the melodic line, the rhythm, or the meter is often considered questionable. In contrast, the significance of the score in African American music is determined by the genre or type of music that it represents.

An example from the choral Gospel music tradition may be illustrative. As a music whose foundation rests in the oral rather

than a written tradition, African American Gospel choirs typically learn new repertoire by rote, having heard the chosen selection sung by another group, or having heard the recording on CD, radio, or television. Frequently, no transcription of the selection exists or at least the choir does not have scores. It is the choir director's responsibility to know and demonstrate every vocal line and ensure that the parts blend harmonically.

Even though Gospel music is often referred to as a "composed" music (distinguishing it from the spiritual created during slavery whose specific composers are unknown), writers of Gospel songs both expect and accept deviation from the score. This improvisational dimension of

This improvisational dimension of Gospel music performance does not mean that "anything goes." On the contrary, there are boundaries and principles and broadly accepted musical values to guide performers.

Gospel music performance does not mean that "anything goes." On the contrary, there are boundaries and principles and broadly accepted musical values to guide performers in deciding when, what, and how to do what they do. Only through the discipline of constant practice, generated by a sincere willingness and desire to learn, will the expression of African American music grow to assume personal and collective meaning in worship.

In the next IT issue: Performance practices for leading African American sacred song

Endnotes

1. John Arthur Nunes, summary note for *This Far by Faith*, in William Braun and Barry Bobb, "Source Documents in American Lutheran Hymnody," vol. 2 (1995-2022) (Chicago, IL: Center for Church Music, 2023), 35. Reprinted by permission.
2. "Go Tell It on the Mountain," 70; "Were You There," 92; "Let Us Break Bread Together," 212; "Come, Let Us Eat," 214; "In Christ There Is No East or West," 359; "Lift Every Voice and Sing," 562.
3. "Preface," *This Far by Faith* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1999), 13-14. Reprinted by permission.



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*Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
naught be all else to me, save that thou art;
thou my best thought both by day and by night,
waking and sleeping, thy presence my light.*

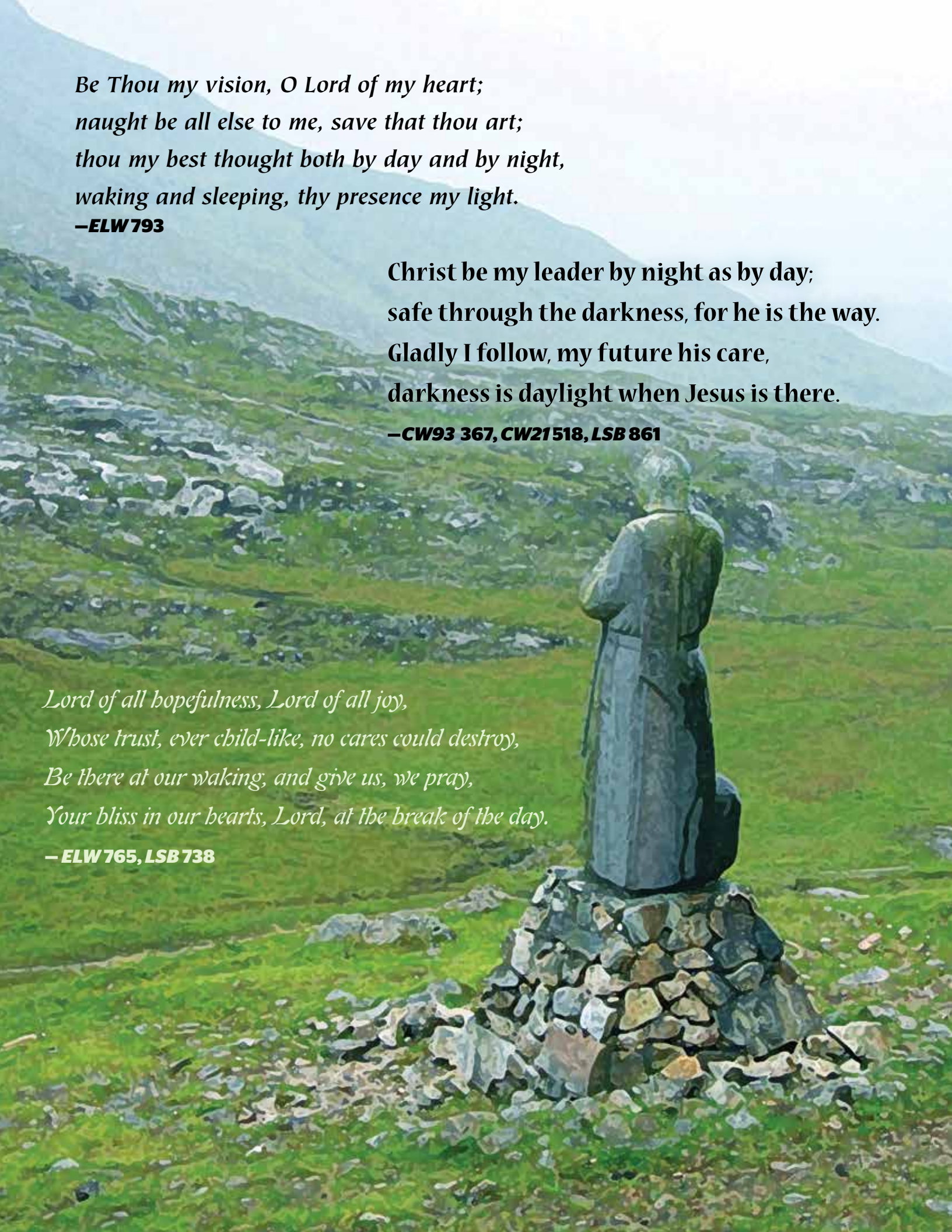
—ELW 793

**Christ be my leader by night as by day;
safe through the darkness, for he is the way.
Gladly I follow, my future his care,
darkness is daylight when Jesus is there.**

—CW93 367, CW21518, LSB 861

*Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
Whose trust, ever child-like, no cares could destroy,
Be there at our waking, and give us, we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.*

—ELW 765, LSB 738



Reflection on SLANE

by Craig Mather

“**b**e Thou My Vision” is an old and well-loved hymn. Its original Gaelic poetry has traditionally been attributed to the Irish poet Dallán Forgaill, who is supposed to have composed it in the sixth century. Scholars reject this attribution, however, and think instead that it must have originated at least two centuries later.¹ Irish linguist Mary Byrne translated the original Gaelic into English prose in 1905; Eleanor Hull then arranged Byrne’s translation into verse in 1912; and the editors of the *Irish Church Hymnal* joined it to an old Irish folk tune for publication in 1919.²

They called the tune SLANE to commemorate St. Patrick’s defiance of King Loiguire of Ireland in 433 CE. According to legend, the saint dared light a Paschal fire atop Slane Hill on Easter Eve in defiance of the king’s edict,³ which forbade that any fire be kindled, “whether far off or near,” before the fire in the king’s palace, which was to announce the beginning of a pagan festival.⁴

Years later, Jan Struther composed new poetry to be set to SLANE and published it in 1931 with the title “Lord of All Hopefulness.”⁵ Timothy Dudely-Smith also wrote new text in 1961 and titled it “Christ Be My Leader.”⁶

The following piano arrangement would be well suited to use as

The first published setting of the translated ancient Irish poem, known today as “Be Thou My Vision,” to the traditional Irish tune SLANE as it appeared in the 1919 *Church Hymnal* for use by the Church of Ireland.

This piano arrangement would be well-suited to use as an offertory or communion voluntary, and certain of its elements could be appropriated to the accompaniment of congregational singing.

an offertory or communion voluntary, and certain of its elements could be appropriated to the accompaniment of congregational singing. However, if accompanying “Lord of All Hopefulness” or “Christ Be My Leader,” one must take care to adjust the arrangement so that it includes the anacruses (pick-up notes) that appear before some phrases in the melodic line of these versions.



Craig Mather is a member of Christ the Vine Lutheran Church, Damascus, OR, and lives in

Gladstone, OR, with his wife, Laura,

and daughter, Lydia. He occasionally composes and arranges music for worship. You can contact him at craigdmather@yahoo.com.

Endnotes

1. Wikipedia.org, “Be Thou My Vision,” last modified October 5, 2023, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Be_Thou_My_Vision.
2. Chris Fenner, “Rop tú mo baile,” *Hymnology Archive* (July 9, 2018), <https://www.hymnologyarchive.com/be-thou-my-vision>.
3. Joseph V. Micallef, “St. Patrick, Irish Whiskey, and the Hill of Slane,” *Forbes* (March 17, 2020), <https://www.forbes.com/sites/joemicallef/2020/03/17/st-patrick-irish-whiskey-and-the-hill-of-slane/?sh=72865be878da>.
4. Muirchú, “The Life of Saint Patrick,” in *St. Patrick: His Writings and Life*, trans. and ed. Newport J. D. White (London: SPCK, 1920), 84, <https://archive.org/details/StPatrick1920/page/n5/mode/2up?view=theater>.
5. Hymnary.org, “Lord of All Hopefulness,” https://hymnary.org/text/lord_of_all_hopefulness_lord_of_all_joy.
6. Hymnary.org, “Christ Be My Leader,” https://hymnary.org/text/christ_be_my_leader_by_night_as_by_day.

< St Patrick (statue by Clíodna Cussen, 1986) watches over Mam Ean pass in the Binn Mhor mountains, Ireland. Wikimedia Commons, edited by Kathryn Brewer.

SLANE

"Be Thou My Vision" (ELW 793); "Lord of All Hopefulness" (ELW 765, LSB 738);

"Christ Be My Leader" (CW93 367, CW21 518, LSB 861)

Arr. Craig Mather

Pedal to be used throughout following harmonic rhythm

The score is written for piano and consists of five systems of music. Each system has a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The key signature is two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The first system is labeled 'Piano' and includes a 'Pedal' marking. The second system is labeled 'Pno.' and begins with a measure number of 9. The third system is labeled 'Pno.' and begins with a measure number of 17. The fourth system is labeled 'Pno.' and begins with a measure number of 23. The fifth system is labeled 'Pno.' and begins with a measure number of 30. The music features a variety of textures, including block chords, arpeggiated figures, and flowing eighth-note passages.

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Pno.

Pno.

Pno.

Pno.

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Navigating and Reporting Copyright in Worship

by Mark W. Lawson

many of us remember a time when churches sang only from a hymnal, and no church musician had to know what it meant to “license” music. This was something that you only worried about if you made a recording or produced community concerts.

Those days are long gone. Now churches print music for congregations, project music on screens, and stream live services on a multitude of different platforms. We are fortunate to have licensing services such as OneLicense and CCLI do this in one place, but this extra step of reporting takes organization, communication, and common understanding—often among several people.

There are several steps to think through to help make this process smoother.

1. Decide on and train the person who is to do the reporting.

The process of reporting is confusing at first, and the person doing the reporting is often not the person who is selecting the music to use. Sometimes there are multiple people reporting. Both OneLicense and CCLI have tutorials to help one learn the process. To locate another resource, consider that there are other churches that are reporting on a regular basis and have the process figured out. Find out who they are and ask for advice.

2. Understand the difference between OneLicense and CCLI.

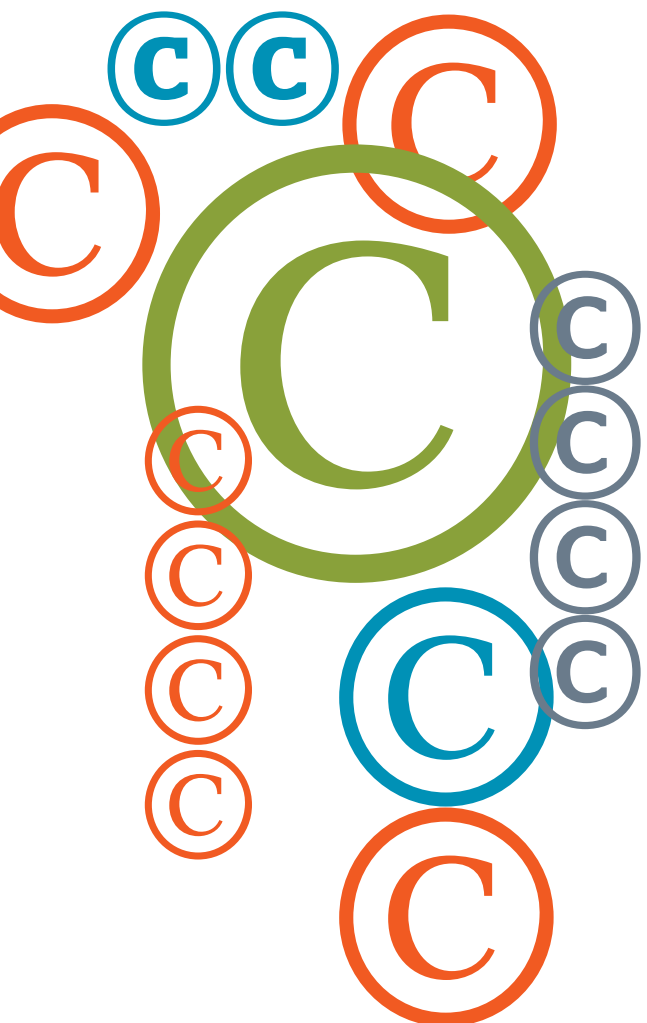
The primary difference is the way information is handled for more traditional services and contemporary Christian music.

This extra step of reporting takes organization, communication, and common understanding—often among several people.

Even though some publishers are members of both, many publishers are members of just one. The data needed for these two companies may be different. Users should work to know the difference, identify the one they need, and realize they may need both if doing multiple styles of music in worship services.

3. Organize the data needed.

One suggestion is to set up a shared spreadsheet with columns for the information needed for each piece of music being used in a service. Ask anyone selecting music for the service to put the information about the piece into the spreadsheet during the planning process, not after. Reconstructing this information a week or two after the service is hard to do, particularly if you have guest musicians, substitutes or volunteers leading such groups as handbells, or brass groups. The information gathered will obviously differ a bit among the kinds of music being reported.



So what information should you track?

- **Copyright information:** always refer to the copyright line of music being used and report based on the copyright line, not the publisher. This is a very common misunderstanding. Publishers work together with other publishers and copyright owners to publish music, but they may not own the rights. Reporting is based on the owner of the copyright, not the publisher unless specifically stated in the copyright line.
- **Composer information/ Text information:** As we move more and more into the digital age, this reporting is becoming a vital source of income for creators.
- **Title on the music:** It is common for publishers of organ and piano music to use hymn tunes for titles or to put a common hymn text name as the title. Then when it is used in a church service, the organist will often list a different title in the bulletin. The reporting should be based on the published title. This is a particular difficulty for the person doing the reporting if they are not the person choosing the music.
- **Kind of usage:** Rates paid to the publishers differ depending on the kind of use. Print is different than streaming, for instance.



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Keep the spreadsheet for future use. Once you have reported a title, it is very easy to report it again in the future by using the identification number (listed on the OneLicense website).

Common Questions

What do I report?

- For streaming, report every piece of copyrighted music used in the service. Public Domain usage is not needed unless it is a new arrangement. This includes copyrighted free accompaniments and introductions.
- Copyrighted hymns sung out of a hymnal need to be reported if the service is being streamed.

What if I can't find the piece I am looking for in the database?

- Check first to see if that copyright holder is a member of the licensing service.
- Manually enter as much information as you can about the composer, tune, and what is on the copyright line.

Time spent now on organizing the data needed for reporting will save a great deal of time later and cut down on the frustration of all those involved. Accurate reporting ensures that creators are paid and helps keep the use of copyrighted material legal.



Mark W. Lawson is the president of MorningStar Music Publishers and ECS Publishing Group in St. Louis, MO.

“Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise”

by Carla Waterman

Artwork by Pamela Keske

When I was a teenager, one of my favorite activities was to walk along a Lake Michigan beach with my two sisters, singing all the stanzas of every hymn we knew. It wasn't exactly a competition since we needed (and enjoyed) each other's voices too much. But there were good-natured bragging rights for the one who remembered the most stanzas.

One of those hymns was “Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise” (CW93 240, CW21 614, ELW834, LSB 802—I'll be quoting from ELW below). It is a hymn perhaps best pondered in the summer, when light is abundant and our eyes awaken to what is seen and unseen. Even without a beach, this is the season for lying under a tree and letting the sun play across our eyes, reminding us again of the properties of light that both illumine and obscure our sight.

“Immortal, Invisible” is a classic Christian hymn that appeals to our perception of how we encounter God. This hymn text begins:

*Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise!*

While biblical themes of God's visual glory undergird this hymn, its text is directly inspired by 1 Timothy. The invocation in chapter 1 reads, “To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.” (1:17; ESV). The apostle Paul will pick up this theme again at the end of the letter, while in between are gritty instructions to the church. It is one of earthiest letters Paul wrote, and I am struck by the way the body of the letter is sandwiched within such a transcendent view of God.

The second stanza reads:

*Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might;
thy justice like mountains high soaring above
thy clouds which are fountains
of goodness and love.*

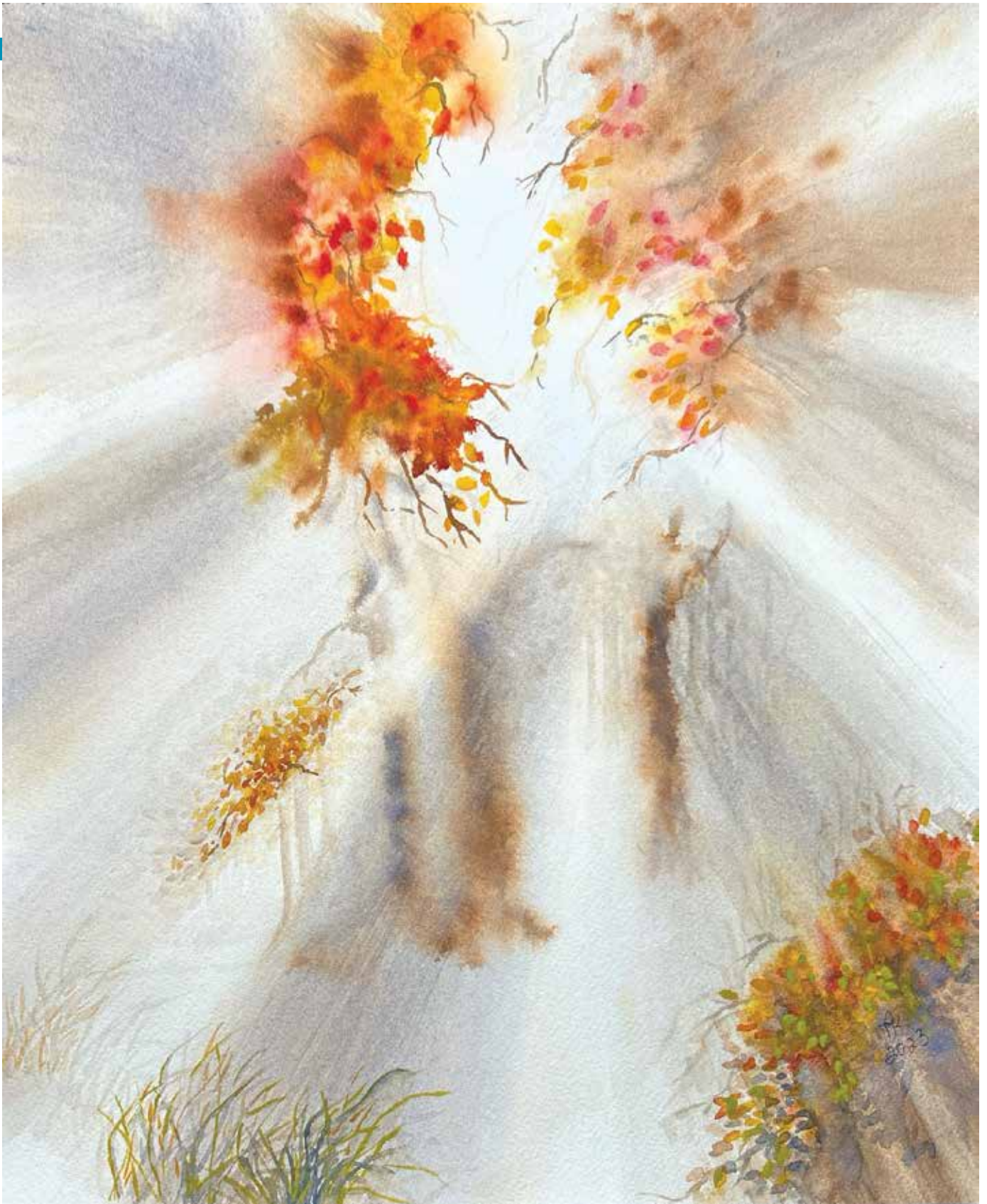
When I discovered this hymn in high school, I remember being transfixed by this second stanza. I was reminded of C.S. Lewis' *eldil*, his angelic creatures in the Space Trilogy: “Whenever he looked straight at them they appeared to be rushing towards him with enormous speed; whenever his eyes took in their surroundings he realized that they were stationary.”¹ Unresting. Unhasting.

**We find a space
of unruffled
intentionality
combined with a
sufficiency full of
God's responses
to our deepest
needs for justice,
goodness, and
love.**

Our hymn writer dwells in the character of God amid these strong contrasts. We find a space of unruffled intentionality combined with a sufficiency full of God's responses to our deepest needs for justice, goodness, and love. All of this is communicated in language that appeals to our eyes: a steady stream of light, mountains, clouds—earthly images that give us a glimpse into heavenly power.

*To all, life thou givest, to both great and small;
in all life thou livest, the true life of all;
we blossom and flourish like leaves on the tree,
and wither and perish, but naught changeth thee.*

*Thou reignest in glory; thou dwellest in light;
thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight;
all laud we would render; oh, help us to see
'tis only the splendor of light hideth thee!*



*To all, life thou givest, to both great and small;
in all life thou livest, the true life of all.*

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**The effects of light
are fully present
in the life cycle of
all living things.**

These last two stanzas are contrasts between the earthly and the heavenly. While light is not mentioned in stanza three, the effects of light are fully present in the life cycle of all living things. We wax and wane, as do the leaves on trees, but God never changes.

And while we are pondering our mortality we enter the triumphant last stanza of this great hymn, where the heavens are peeled back as far as we can see—which isn't very far. Here we find ourselves at the end of 1 Timothy where Paul reminds us of the character of the immortal God: “the King of kings and Lord of lords who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see” (6:15b–16a).

Here are some thoughts on the use of this unique hymn of transcendence invoked through light. It would be fabulous around the summer solstice, bringing together—as in stanzas 3 and 4—our natural world and the heavenly kingdom.

Perhaps this is a service held outside. Or it's one featuring art that depicts different expressions of light and shadow.

Perhaps this is a service geared toward children (which, if done well, can be highly instructive to their elders). I wonder if there is an elementary science curriculum that explores the phenomenon of both

**We wax and wane,
as do the leaves
on trees, but God
never changes.**

seeing with and being blinded by light. If so, the children's sermon may not need an adult counterpart that week. This hymn has so many possibilities for highly creative, hands-on services of summer light that allow us to meditate on God's hidden presence.

As a musician, I would assume that my congregation doesn't know this hymn, either the words or the music. So I might take a moment at the beginning of the service to teach the tune. Then I would either sing the hymn slowly at different places in the service or—when we sang it as a whole—I would have my accompanist play a long interlude between the stanzas, during which the leader succinctly points out the theme in the next stanza. Obviously, this hymn could also form the basis for a wonderful homily, which would free musicians to enter more fully into the moment and the music. Let it build until the last line—where God gets the last word.

At the end of the day, I have a plea: let's keep singing it. This great hymn now only appears in about fifty percent of the hymnals being published in the United

**This hymn has so
many possibilities
for highly creative,
hands-on services
of summer light
that allow us to
meditate on God's
hidden presence.**

States. It provides an insight into God that is unparalleled in our hymnody. Who knows, maybe some other kids from another family will find themselves pondering the words as they walk the beach on a summer day.



Carla Waterman is a founding faculty member of the Robert E. Webber Institute for Worship

Studies (Jacksonville, FL) and former chaplain and spirituality professor at Northern Seminary (Lisle, IL). She is a practical theologian who enjoys collaborative work and has a blog at www.carlawaterman.com. Waterman is the worship accompanist at Advent Lutheran Church in Maple Grove, MN, and lives in a suburb of Minneapolis.



Pamela Keske, Carla's sister, has been putting pictures to Waterman's words since 2009,

when Keske created five pen and ink folk icons for Waterman's book *Songs of Assent* (Carol Stream, IL: WaterManuscripts, 2009). Keske's degree is from Wheaton College (Wheaton, IL) in youth ministry. She uses art in much of her work as a teacher and youth leader at Church of the Cross in Hopkins, MN. Keske and her husband live in Coon Rapids, MN.

Endnote

1. C. S. Lewis. *Perelandra*, vol. 2 of his *Space Trilogy* (EPub Ed., 2012), ch. 16, Kindle.

psallite!

Pentecost Psalmody

by Grace Hennig

for many years now (almost thirty) I have kept in the top drawer of my desk a collection of twelve cards titled “Seasons at Saint Luke” (a Lutheran church on Belmont Avenue in Chicago, IL). There is one card each for a particular season of the church year with a brief explanation of the season’s focus accompanied by vibrant photos showing how that season is represented in worship. Visual impact of the current season comes through processions, use of colored fabric in and outside the sanctuary, special altar cloths and adornments, plants, trees, fruits and vegetables in displays, and use of such items as balloons, flags, and banners in worship.

The card for the Day of Pentecost is titled “Setting Fire.” It states that as people enter, red cloth hangs from above as “tongues of fire,” and red fabric strips on the nave walls stand for the Church, a unified body made up of many individuals. The altar is covered in red, and red flowers are on either side of it. At the start of worship, a procession with banners of red streamers enter, and these streamer banners come back flying and swirling during the final hymn as they are taken through the aisles and out the door. After church the banners are found outside blowing in the wind, symbolically sending the faith-filled parishioners into the world armed with the Holy Spirit.

Visual possibilities for the Festival of Pentecost can inspire musicians to think about what can be done

musically to lift peoples’ song into the Pentecost story and message. Let’s explore psalmody for the Pentecost festival as it captures the sending of the Spirit through music.

Psalm 104, in part or whole, is appointed for Pentecost in *ELW* and *CW21*. *LSB* draws on verses from Psalm 25 (Year A), Psalm 139 (Year B), and Psalm 143 (Year C). Each of these psalms emphasizes a personal aspect of our faith. The following favorite settings vary in mood, both capturing the intimacy of these personal psalms and reflecting the power of the Holy Spirit’s work.

Psalm 104—GIA

A setting with through-composed verses by Carl Schalk from *Lectionary Psalms and Gospel Acclamations* conjures up the quiet intimacy of the psalm. Pepper Choplin’s lovely “As Long As I Live,” a subdued SATB choral setting with optional light rhythm ensemble, also captures the personal nature of the psalm. Alexander C. Peloquin’s “Lord, Send Out Your Spirit,” an SATB classic (cantor, assembly, and organ, with optional brass and percussion), provides contrast to the first two settings with its striking, Lydian sound, reflecting the powerful “holy fire” of Pentecost.

Psalm 104—Christian Worship: Psalter (CWP)

CWP makes use of a refrain by Richard Proulx in its 104A setting and includes the Steven C. Warner



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setting from GIA as 104B (“Send Forth Your Spirit O Lord”), for SATB choir, cantor, and assembly, with optional C instrument, guitar, flute, and keyboard. 104C is a metric setting of Fred R. Anderson’s beautifully poetic paraphrase, “Bless the Lord, My Soul and Being,” with the uplifting C. Hubert H. Parry tune RUSTINGTON. The psalter’s final setting (104D), “Come, Holy Spirit,” is by composer Jon D. Vieker, written for unison choir, congregation, and piano. This lovely, simple setting is congregation-friendly in its mostly stepwise motion and limited range in both the refrain and verses, and it would be a good choice for children’s choir, too.

Psalms 25, 139, 143—Concordia

Psalm 25 settings to highlight are Carl Schalk’s beautifully reflective a cappella “Show Me Your Ways, O Lord”; and the exciting, Renaissance-flavored *Becker Psalter* recast by Jonathan Kohrs and David W. Rogner in *Salvation’s Joy*, written



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for SATB choir, C instrument, organ, percussion, and piano. If you are seeking a vocal solo for Psalm 25, Robert J. Powell's *Songs from the Psalms* are art song-like settings for medium-high voice and keyboard, beautifully illuminating the psalm text. Psalm collections that provide settings for all three appointed psalms are Amanda Husberg and Richard Leach's *The Concordia Psalter*, Series C, Set 1 (Psalm 25 and 143) and *The Concordia Psalter*, Series B, Set 3 (Psalm 139). *Psalm Partners*, a responsorial collection by Donald Rotermund (downloadable), includes psalm refrains fashioned from familiar hymn tunes that are paired with psalm tones in *LSB*.

Among Concordia settings of Psalm 139 are K. Lee Scott's "Search Me, O God" and Robert J. Powell's "Lord, You Have Searched Me Out," with obligato violin. Both are SATB settings with organ accompaniment, beautifully painting the text of the psalm with quiet intensity.

Psalm 143 offerings are Raymond Haan's dramatic "Lord, Hear My Prayer" for SATB choir, featuring a significant organ part in its shifting moods. Handbells are

included with an SATB choral setting in John A. Behnke and Kenneth T. Kosche's *3 Psalm Settings*, Set 2.

Psalm 104—Augsburg Fortress

Mark Mummert's simple "Psalm 104" is for choir with congregational refrain. Among Wayne L. Wold's offerings is an original text for "Come, Holy Spirit" from *Take My Voice and Let Me Sing: Music for Smaller Ensembles*, for SAB and keyboard, with optional solo.

Psalm 104—MorningStar

Two lovely settings you'll want to consider are "O Lord, How Manifold Are Your Works" by Alfred V. Fedak, written for SATB choir and keyboard (organ or piano), which builds in intensity and volume; and Z. Randall Stroope's majestic "Trinity Psalms," filled with the brilliance of instruments, alleluias, and images of light—it is set for SATB choir and organ, with optional brass quintet. The versatile and festive "Lord, Send Out Your Spirit" by James J. Chepponis is for cantor, congregation, and organ, with optional SATB choir, C instrument, trumpet, and handbells; while Carl Schalk's "I Will Sing to the Lord" from *Four Psalm Motets* quietly and beautifully sets Psalm 104:31,33 for a cappella SATB choir.

Psalm 25, 139, 143—MorningStar

If psalmody is new to your congregation, a good place to start might be with these popular, versatile collections: Hal H. Hopson's *The People's Psalter*, for cantor, unison

voices or SATB choir, and congregation, with optional children's choir; and Luke Mayernik's *The Five Graces Psalter*, responsorial settings featuring SATB choir, cantor, assembly, and organ or piano accompaniment, with optional guitar. Each of these collections sets the entire three-year lectionary of appointed psalms.

What is the Pentecost festival to us? Does Pentecost get the vivid liturgical attention it calls for in your church? We have skimmed just some of the music that composers have written to edify the faith and learned a small bit about what visual artists have done to illuminate the meaning of the day. Psalmody is just one component of worship, but adding a setting to the Pentecost festival can impress upon believers the significance of the day and bring to light the eternal meaning that the work of the Holy Spirit has in our lives.



Grace Hennig is a professor of music at Martin Luther College (New Ulm, MN). She has served as a

parish musician in Illinois, California, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Her hymn tunes and settings appear in *Christian Worship: Supplement* (Milwaukee, WI: Northwestern, 2008), *Lift Up Your Hearts: Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs* (Grand Rapids, MI: Faith Alive Christian Resources, 2013), and *CWP* (Milwaukee, WI: Northwestern, 2021). Other compositions have been published by Northwestern and GIA. Grace served on the committee that produced *CWP*.



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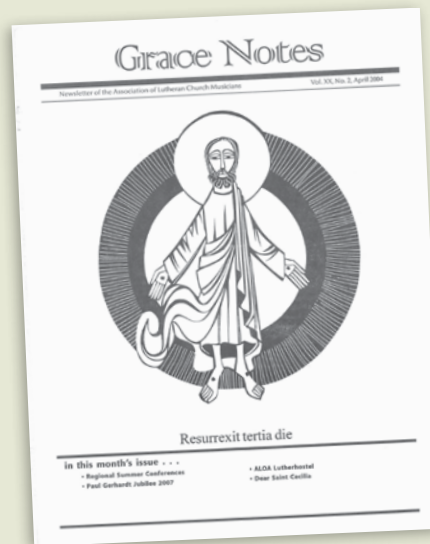
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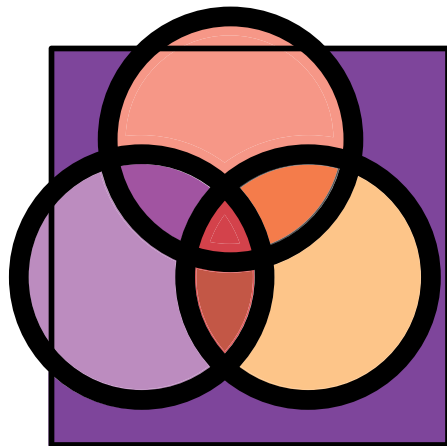
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Welcoming the Gospel: Pentecost, Trinity, and Sundays after Pentecost

by Michael E. Krentz

The Day of Pentecost and The Holy Trinity often coincide with the ending of the choir “season” and the beginning of their summer break. Thus they provide a chance for a more “festive” gospel acclamation before the simplicity of summer. The acclamations here are based on tunes associated with each of those two days. By singing the corresponding hymns, both acclamation and hymn can gain extra resonance with your assembly.

The acclamation for Pentecost is based on the tune VENI, CREATOR SPIRITUS. Since the tune is a plainsong tune, I envision a capella performance, keeping this music simple because there will be plenty of other festive (fancy) music on the day. A cantor sings the Alleluias so that the people know their part. Begin by just giving the pitch to the cantor



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By singing the corresponding hymns, both acclamation and hymn can gain extra resonance with your assembly.

or—if they are comfortable—they can just start. If some support is desired, a drone on F and C could be provided by handbells, shruti box, or the organ.

The acclamation for The Holy Trinity uses the familiar tune GROSSER GOTT, married to the Trinity text “Holy God, We Praise Your Name.” If your choir has not begun a summer break, SATB singing on both the Alleluias and verse would give this acclamation the richness it deserves. Organ accompaniment could deepen that even more.



© KATHRYN BREWER

The acclamation for Lectionary 11B could serve as a general acclamation throughout the Sundays after Pentecost. It is based on the familiar tune DUKE STREET. A cantor can lead it, with keyboard accompaniment.

Bulletin graphics are available by emailing me at mekrentz@gmail.com.

Sing your alleluias as you welcome the gospel into your assemblies!



Michael E. Krentz is director of music and organist at Christ Lutheran Church, Allentown, PA.

Previously he was on the faculty for nine years at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, PA (now part of United Lutheran Seminary), and was director of music at The Lutheran Church of the Holy Spirit in Emmaus, PA, for twenty years. Krentz is secretary/treasurer of ALCM.

Welcome with Meekness the Implanted Word

(All)

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

(Leader or choir)

Wel - come with meekness the im - plant - ted word

(Repeat alleluias)

that has the power to save your souls.

Text: James 1:21
Music: Michael E. Krentz, b. 1954, based on *Duke Street*
© 2021 Michael E. Krentz

Come, Holy Spirit

A leader sings the alleluias, all repeat

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,

al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

Leader

Come, Ho - ly Spi - rit, fill the hearts of your faith - ful,

All sing the alleluias again

and kin - dle in us the fire of your love.

Text: traditional, from the Liturgy
Music: *Veni, Creator Spiritus*, arr. Michael E. Krentz, b. 1954
© 2021, Michael E. Krentz; all rights reserved

Reproducible for current ALCM members

Holy, Holy, Holy

(All)

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,

The first system of music consists of a treble and bass staff in B-flat major. The treble staff has a melody with lyrics 'Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,'. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines.

al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

The second system continues the melody and accompaniment from the first system, ending with a double bar line.

(Leader or choir)

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;

The third system features a new melody for the leader or choir. The treble staff begins with a repeat sign and contains the lyrics 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;'. The bass staff continues with a simple accompaniment.

(Repeat alleluias)

God's glo - ry fills the whole earth.

The fourth system returns to the 'Alleluia' melody. The treble staff has the lyrics 'God's glo - ry fills the whole earth.' and is marked with '(Repeat alleluias)'. The bass staff provides the accompaniment.

Text: Isaiah 6:3

Music: *Grosser Gott*, arr. Michael E. Krentz, b. 1954

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leading the congregation

Contemporary ⇨ Organ ⇐ Traditional

by Paul R. Otte

In the last issue of *In Tempo*, I suggested that our churches should not be divided by the songs we sing. While we may have services that are “contemporary” and “traditional” by performance forces and styles, we need to have some reasonable crossover. Such worship is often called “blended,” and I suspect that many places would use this term to describe their service. As I said in the last article, I used this concept by including at least one contemporary song in each traditional service and one traditional hymn in each contemporary service. This blending is sometimes made necessary when performance forces such as a praise team are not available, such as in funerals or week-day services. If there is only one musician, the organ and piano/keyboard may be separated by distance and the musician cannot easily go back and forth between them.

Contemporary songs are seldom written out for organ on three staves in the accompaniment editions of major hymnals.¹ When they are written on a grand staff, these settings generally work much better on the piano than on the organ (need for sustain pedal, arpeggiated accompaniment, and so forth). By the way, in a large church, you will probably have to mike the piano to lead singing. (You mike an upright piano by putting the microphone behind the piano by the soundboard.)

I have been asked to play both traditional hymns and contemporary songs in one funeral service.

But wait, when you have a contemporary song in a traditional service, must you hop off the organ bench and dash to the piano bench? I’m first in line to support the concept that the organ is an instrument unto itself, but years ago, that wasn’t the case. The organ was then known for imitating the sounds of nearly every instrument you can think of—French horn, harp, viola, and others. Even many books of “organ” music consisted of instrumental pieces transcribed for organ. So why not play contemporary songs on the organ?

The organ was then known for imitating the sounds of nearly every instrument you can think of.

Don’t misunderstand me. Praise teams are great but not always available in a smaller congregation or in circumstances

mentioned above (funerals, services during the day, and so on.) Even with contemporary music, the organ can be among the best instruments to accompany singing. Some of us are quite able to write out music by hand or with the computer, and in those cases it’s fairly easy to write an organ accompaniment. Naturally, the melody is on top, the left hand can play repeated chords to imitate the strumming of a guitar,

PAULLOTTE



Example 1

Accompaniment Patterns

Pick one pattern and adapt it to different keys for your song or create your own.

The musical notation for Example 1 is presented in a grand staff format, specifically for an organ. It consists of three staves. The top staff is a treble clef staff with a 4/4 time signature, containing four measures of whole rests, each labeled with a 'G' chord above it. The middle staff is a bass clef staff, also in 4/4 time, which contains the organ accompaniment. It features a series of chords in the first two measures, followed by a more rhythmic pattern in the last two measures. The bottom staff is another bass clef staff, also in 4/4 time, showing a simple bass line with two half notes per measure. The word 'Organ' is written to the left of the first two staves.

The pedal can be varied by using a dotted half and a quarter instead of two half notes—or experiment!

and the pedal can play a strong 16' sound to imitate the bass guitar. With surprisingly little effort, one can learn to play off a lead sheet (melody only with chords above). *Example 1* shows some patterns easily played by the left hand and pedal. Choose the one that best goes with the tempo and tune of the song you are setting. Adapt the pattern to the chords you need and be creative!

Copyright restrictions keep me from including a complete setting of a song here, but here are a few generalizations that may help you. In contemporary melodies, passing tones and returning tones are often accompanied with the same chord, rather than changing the chords often. This “harmonic rhythm” is much slower in contemporary-style music than it is in traditional. Don’t worry about the occasional note that doesn’t fit the chord. Contemporary songs aren’t concerned with parallel octaves or fifths. (See *example 2*.)

A note about registration: in *In Tempo* 2022, no. 2, I suggested registrations to use when playing

With surprisingly little effort, one can learn to play off a lead sheet.

the melody on a separate manual (RH) than the accompaniment (LH). In most of these cases, I would use 16' and 8' flutes in the pedal and 8' and 4' flutes in the left hand. But when accompanying in the style of contemporary music, the LH is imitating the rhythm guitar, which requires a more percussive sound; try using 8' and 2' flutes or a stop with the most chuff. The pedal is imitating the bass guitar, so use a registration heavy on the 16' side, such as a 16' Principal or Diapason.

Praise teams in small to mid-size congregations are made up of whatever is available: piano, trap set (or bass drum and snare), tambourine, guitar, bass guitar, cajon, congas, and so on. Why not involve one or more of these while accompanying a contemporary song with the organ? Invite someone to play along with the organ on the tambourine. Or when singing a contemporary song with the

organ, ask a guitar player to play along. Remember when you write out your accompaniment for the organ (or piano) with a guitar, avoid keys with flats, such as E \flat , B \flat , F \flat , A \flat . Keys easy for guitarists are G, C, E, Em, D, Dm, A, Am.

While this article has attempted to show that the organ can be at home in a contemporary worship song, the next article will focus on bringing a more contemporary flavor to traditional hymns. May God bless your efforts to make your church organ more versatile in the world of worship songs as we strive for unity in God’s church.

When accompanying in the style of contemporary music, the LH is imitating the rhythm guitar, which requires a more percussive sound.

Example 2

Harmonic Rhythm Patterns

(Tune: **ADORO TE DEVOTE**)

Fast harmonic rhythm typical of traditional hymns:

D bm f#m D D6 G D G bm A6 G D

Organ

Slower harmonic rhythm typical of contemporary music:

D A D

When singing a contemporary song with the organ, ask a guitar player to play along.



Paul R. Otte is a retired minister of music. He’s been a member of ALCM since its organization. He has studied with Conrad Morgan, Paul Manz, Fred Jackisch, and Jan Bender. He is a graduate of Concordia University (St. Paul, MN) with a BA in education and of Wittenberg University (Springfield, OH) with an MSM. In retirement he enjoys composing and travel.

Photo p. 31 courtesy the author.

Endnote

1. On the next page is an organ setting of a contemporary worship song, “I Am Covered Over.” Unlike most worship songs, this is free of copyright, so I could write an organ setting. A slightly longer version appears on the ALCM website; that one includes a key change for the repeated stanza.

I am Covered Over

Moderato (♩ = c. 94)

Writer anonymous - Public Domain

The musical score is arranged in four systems, each with a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The piano part consists of a right-hand part with chords and a left-hand part with a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The vocal line is in 4/4 time and includes lyrics. Chord changes are indicated above the vocal line.

System 1: Chords: C, f, Dm. Lyrics: "I am covered o-ver with the robe of right-eous-ness that Je-sus gives to me,"

System 2: Chords: G7, C. Lyrics: "gives to me. I am covered over with the precious blood of Jesus and He lives in me, lives in me."

System 3: Chords: A7, Dm. Lyrics: "Oh, what a joy it is to know My heav-en-ly Fa-ther loves me so, He gives to me— my Je - sus."

System 4: Chords: C, G7, C. Lyrics: "When He looks at me, He sees not what I used to be, but He sees Je - - - sus."

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April 20	Networking, Music Swap and Workshop Variety	Andrew Peters	Augustana Lutheran, Denver, CO
April 27	Sing Joyfully: Children's Choir Festival	Sally Messner	Hennepin Avenue UMC, Minneapolis, MN
May 4	Getting Ahead: Music for Advent–Epiphany	Tony Cruz	St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran, Jacksonville, FL
May 4	Working with Small Choirs	Laura Petrie	Gethsemane, Hackettstown, NJ
Oct. 12	Organ Workshops	Felix Hell	St. John's Lutheran, Phoenixville, PA

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the organ

Sheep Are Helping You Play the Pipe Organ!

by Luke Tegtmeier

Last Fall I had the pleasure of attending the American Institute of Organbuilders' forum in Charlottesville, VA. It was wonderful seeing colleagues who face similar challenges and share similar interests. Many of you will be familiar with that from attending ALCM conferences! We spent four days visiting lovely instruments around the area and listening to lectures at the hotel. The lectures covered many topics, including how to write professional contracts, choosing wood species, building keyboards, the history of organ cases, and how to effectively transfer company ownership when the owner is ready to retire. But my favorite lecture was learning about the process of leather tanning.

Did you know that all pipe organs involve leather in the mechanism? Leather provides organ builders with a long-lasting, airtight product that is also flexible. Depending on how your organ works, it might only be used on reservoir tops, but it might also be used throughout the chest mechanism that allows air into the pipes when the organist presses a key. Organ consoles often also have leather-covered pneumatic action parts. And sometimes tremolo motors and Swell shade engines are controlled by pneumatic mechanisms, which are created using leather. Do you know where organ leather comes from?



Hair sheep provide meat to eat and leather for organ builders to use.

Many of us know that the leather for our boots, belts, and coats usually comes from cattle. But the organ industry requires leather to be airtight and flexible, and cattle leather does not reliably meet this requirement. Instead, we use leather from hair sheep.

Approximately ninety percent of all sheep are wool sheep. They grow so much wool fiber that they must be sheared once a year. This abundance makes wool sheep a poor match for warm climates. The rest of the world's sheep are hair sheep, and they live primarily in Africa and Latin America. Their hair functions more like the

Leather from hair sheep is both flexible enough to move for various organ parts and thick enough to be truly airtight.

fur on such animals as cattle or horses, because it does not need to be sheared away. Their fur also lets them live comfortably in warm climates.

From the organ building industry's perspective, hair sheep also produce leather that is especially suited to our concerns. Leather from hair sheep is both flexible

enough to move for various organ parts and thick enough to be truly airtight.

At the tannery, this hair sheep leather goes through a surprisingly long process to be prepared for use in organ building. After being trimmed to a useful size, the leather goes through a machine that uses lime to remove hair. Then it is soaked to remove the lime, and the moisture from the soaking process is removed.

An organ builder carefully inspects a sheet of leather for holes that would allow air to escape through the leather.



After it has been tanned in a chrome solution, the leather is dried and stretched. It goes through a tumbler to make it soft for easy use before being shipped to various buyers, such as organ builders.

Organ builders will place every leather skin on a light table to check for holes before using it. Holes are relatively common in all animal leather due to injuries and bugs. But leather must be airtight for use in most parts of organ building. Then the leather can be buffed on one side. This makes the leather even better at sealing off such points as the pallet for the note channel in a tracker organ or the toe hole in a pitman organ.

Leather can be planed to make it thinner for more sensitive uses. In fact, leather used for some parts of historic organ mechanism must be planed so thin that light can be seen through it! For other uses such as reservoirs, gasketing, and

pipe stoppers, the leather must be left as thick as possible.

And remember that leather cannot get wet in the organ! If organ leather gets wet, it will become very hard to move, and it will shrink. This will cause ciphers (pipes playing even though the organist is not asking the pipe to play) on most instruments, as well as wind leaks.



Luke Tegtmeier

holds degrees in church music from Valparaiso University (IN) and Luther

Seminary (MN). For ten years he was a church musician in Excelsior and Minneapolis, MN. Currently he plays at various churches on Sundays while serving as service manager at Schantz Organ Company (Orrville, OH). He welcomes your questions or comments at Luke@schantzorgan.com.

Photos by Luke Tegtmeier

Hair sheep leather drying after being tanned in a chrome solution.



(re)consider this

“The pastor can’t sing on pitch!”

Come join our 4th Friday virtual happy hours facilitated by ALCM president Nancy Raabe! They are lively one-hour opportunities to build relationships and exchange ideas. In “(Re)Consider This” we share some attendees’ strategies for navigating worship life in community. Below are insights from a recent happy-hour conversation about working with clergy who can’t sing in tune. The ideas below are cited in the order offered in conversation.



© ISTOCK/IK BEIS

Gentle coaching support

- Can you offer vocal coaching support? Offer impromptu lessons here and there—not scary formal, just informal and for a specific liturgical spot.
- “Thank you for your willingness to chant and sing! Can we fine-tune a couple spots to make the music even stronger?”
- Ask pastors to click off their microphone when singing, so that the livestreaming folks (or front rows) can hear the whole congregation (not “because you sing so off-tune”).
- Practice a chant together until they feel comfortable. Add a couple handbells, add a couple children to sing along, at—for instance—the Easter Vigil. Frame it in a way that there is a sense of community and the whole pastor-and-congregation group is feeling that “this is us” and we are in this together.

Frame it in a way that there is a sense of community and ... we are in this together.

- Back off! Don’t behave like “I am the musician and I know.”
- Reminder: “A” in the hymnal rubric = Assistant—for a pastor who just can’t cut it and is unable for whatever reason to learn. No shame in just speaking the liturgical parts.
- Find a range they can sing! Play the chant along with them, maybe. Then modulate to the congregational part. (This might work best with, say, the versicles and Proper Preface all in one key, then modulating to the Sanctus in the usual key.)
- Keep in mind some pastors can sing the hymns but don’t want to sing or chant solo—and fare poorly at it.

Negative comments just undermine confidence further.

- Some pastors get nervous and go out of tune. Use lots of positive reinforcement. Negative comments just undermine confidence further.

- Invite the pastor to join the choir.
- Don’t assume that singing in the main worship service on Sunday is the be-all and end-all.
- Start the conversation before there’s a problem. Somebody new or who you don’t know? Have a conversation with them and remind them of our heritage as Lutherans and how we *love* to have everyone singing with us.
- Have a few informal singing get-togethers (with other cantors or lead singers) to develop the relationship. Relationship always comes first.

Have a few informal singing get-togethers ... to develop the relationship. Relationship always comes first.

Famous Women, Famous Hymns

Quiz answers on page 45

1. **Match the composer to her hymn.** She wrote either the tune or text, or both. Birth and death dates are a hint, in case these women are not famous to *you!* This is not an exhaustive list of tunes or texts by women, but each composer appears in at least one of these hymnals: *CW21*, *ELW*, or *LSB*.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| a. Caroline Sandell Berg, 1832-1903 | Blessed Assurance |
| b. Susan Palo Cherwien, 1953-2021 | Children of the Heavenly Father |
| c. Fanny Crosby, 1820-1915 | Come Away from Rush and Hurry |
| d. Marva Dawn, 1948-2021 | Hymn of Promise |
| e. Charlotte Elliott, 1789-1871 | I Love to Tell the Story |
| f. Kristyn Getty, b. 1980 | I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light |
| g. Katherine Hankey, 1834-1911 | Just As I Am, without One Plea |
| h. Frances Havergal, 1836-1879 | O Blessed Spring |
| i. Anna Hoppe, 1889-1941 | Oh, How Good It Is |
| j. Karen Lafferty, b. 1948 | O Son of God, in Galilee |
| k. Natalie Sleeth, 1930-1992 | Seek Ye First |
| l. Kathleen Thomerson, b. 1934 | Take My Life and Let It Be |

2. **She is a prolific translator** of hymns (*CW21* and *LSB* each list 40 translations by her; *ELW* has 19; and *CW93* cites 57!), but she has never written a hymn text herself.

- Gracia Grindal
- Amanda Husberg
- Katharina von Bora
- Catherine Winkworth

4. **She is a hymn translator** (e.g., *Es IST EIN ROS ENTSPRUNGEN*) and is also a hymn text writer in her own right (“We Sing to You, O God,” *ELW* 791).

- Gracia Grindal
- Amanda Husberg
- Katharina von Bora
- Catherine Winkworth

3. **She is a Lutheran composer** of many hymn tunes (often naming tunes after people), including these melodies: *LOVE’S LIGHT* (“Christ, Your Footprints through the Desert,” *CW21* 379, and “Heavenly Hosts in Ceaseless Worship,” *LSB* 949); *JENNINGS-HOUSTON* (“God the Sculptor of the Mountains,” *ELW* 736); and *SARAH-ELIZABETH* (“I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say,” *LSB* 699).

- Gracia Grindal
- Amanda Husberg
- Katharina von Bora
- Catherine Winkworth

5. **True or False:** Although there are mentions of women hymn writers and composers from the German Reformation, there are no remaining examples of their work.

the retired church musician

Preparing For and Enjoying Retirement

by James Hild

“Preparing For and Enjoying Retirement” was a workshop offered at our most recent (2023) biennial conference, in Philadelphia. Three of my retired colleagues (Bruce Bengston, Tom Schmidt, and Linda Kempke) participated in the discussion panel. There was also lively discussion from the workshop participants. (If you would like to view the two sessions, here is the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8-fesBNLyKO>.)

The following is a summary of our two sessions.

Most of us consider retirement around age 65. What leads to actually leaving varies greatly:

- Financial situation. Can you afford to retire? Consult with your financial planner.
- Family situation. Consult your spouse/partner first!
- Health concerns, such as hearing loss, hand maladies
- The feeling that “God is calling me to other things.”
- Feeling burned out and tired: “I want to be a human being not a human ‘doing’ for a while.”
- Satisfied that you have played and conducted

everything you wanted to play and conduct

- “I’m healthy and want to do other things in my life.”



“I want to be a human being not a human ‘doing.’”



How much time do you give to your congregation and yourself before you leave?

- This varied from three months to a year. Everyone agreed that after you leave you should stay away.
- Maybe retire in stages. For example, hire someone to take on the choir and worship planning while you continue as organist, or vice versa.
- Leave a note for your successor with names and phone numbers of musical leaders in the congregation and outside musicians.
- Clean out your office completely!

What do I do with all my organ and choral scores, recordings, and the like?

- Consult your local AGO chapter. Many chapters have a sale of music during the year.
- Try selling through Facebook Marketplace, Craigslist, eBay.
- Give music to a student.
- Contact Craig Cramer, professor emeritus of music at the University of Notre Dame (Notre Dame, IN). He buys and sells used organ music. He maintains a list of interested musicians, and once or twice a year sends out a list for people to peruse and buy: ccramer@nd.edu.
- Check out the Leupold Archives, <https://theleupoldfoundation.org/product-category/archive/>



Where do I land after serving a parish? What and where is my new church home?

- It is harder in smaller towns. Larger cities have more choices.
- Enjoy church shopping in *all* denominations.
- When you are not at the helm, joining another church sometimes becomes a matter of aesthetics, not just joining a faith community.
- See Lois Martin’s article about moving from leadership to lay person in the pew, *In Tempo* 2020, no. 1.

If you had fifteen or so years to go before retirement, what would you concentrate on?

- Start looking at finances.
- Join a health club.
- Explore financial options.
- What composers would I like my choir to sing?
- What composer would I like to play?



Joining another church sometimes becomes a matter of aesthetics.

Here are some thoughts that don’t necessarily fit into a category, but are helpful:

- Keep your mind fresh. Do puzzles. Learn new pieces on piano or other instruments. Study a new language. Never look back. Be wholly positive.



- Travel (see my article “Traveling with a Purpose,” *In Tempo* 2023, no. 2).
- “When there is change, think of it as an adventure.” The world is bigger than our present experience.
- Offer a retirement recital.

Articles dealing with retirement can be found in back issues of *In Tempo*, beginning with 2019, no. 3. They can be accessed at alcm.org in the members section.



James Hild lives in Wayzata, MN. He served as organist and choir, brass, and handbell director at All Saints Lutheran Church, Minnetonka, MN, for 28 years before his retirement in 2018.

Illustrations: Top p. 40: © iStock/zubada. All others: © iStock/Rudzhan Nagiev

featured interview

Carl Schalk

Wisdom across the Ages

by Nancy Raabe

As God's people, gathered around Word and Sacrament, we sing. But the song is not primarily *our* song, but the *Church's* song. Of course *we* sing, but in worship we sing as a community of faith, joining together with angels, archangels, and all the company of heaven. It is a song sung by all the faithful who have gone before us, and a song that will continue after we are gone. It is a song that, in our own time and place, we are privileged to join. It is a song in which proclamation, teaching, and praise interweave in a tapestry of music unique to the Church. At the heart and center of that song is the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.¹

Who wrote these words? Faithful practitioners of and fans of Lutheran church music over the past half-century will know it can be only one person: Carl Flentge Schalk, composer, conductor, professor, author, radio personality, and lecturer extraordinaire.

Schalk died on January 24, 2021, but that doesn't keep us from wondering what he is doing now.

In our All Saints service last year, many of us heard the vision in Revelation 7 of the multitudes gathered before the throne of the Lamb, proclaiming that great truth which defied the iron fist of the Roman empire and its cultic emperor worship: "Salvation belongs to *our* God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

(Rev. 7:10b; NRSV; emphasis added).

Schalk is surely among these multitudes. Yet we can be fairly certain he is not resting on his laurels—or rather, on his palm branches. "I keep saying the same things over and over again," he once half-apologized.² That is most certainly true, all who knew him would agree. So why would death stop him?

Therefore, as we mark the third anniversary of his death, let's imagine Schalk imparting nuggets from his trove of churchly wisdom to whomever will listen. This "interview" is drawn from various sources and unpublished interviews between Carl and me, and these are his own words.

The Christian Life in a Nutshell: Salt, Light, Leaven

I am neither optimistic nor am I pessimistic about the future of the church. But like anything else in the Christian life, you live in hope—which is not a cop-out. If there are three scriptural images that say to me how Christians are to live in the world, it is salt, light, and leaven. You only need a little bit of salt. One ray of light brightens the darkness. One little lump of yeast leavens the whole loaf. So every church musician, where they are, ought to be that.³



The Vocation of the Composer

God is praised when the Gospel is proclaimed; and the proclamation of the Gospel is the way Christians rightly praise God. ... To help the Church proclaim that Gospel is the privilege and responsibility of the composer for the Church. To proclaim the Gospel means to tell the story of salvation—or at least that significant part of the story which the particular time, season, festival, or commemoration might suggest. Moreover, to tell the story does not mean to tell *about* the story, but to tell it, the story of how God accomplished our salvation.⁴

To help the Church proclaim that Gospel is the privilege and responsibility of the composer for the Church. To proclaim the Gospel means to tell the story of salvation.

Advice for Composers: Start Small

In Wausau [WI, where Schalk served at Zion Lutheran from 1952 to 1958] I wrote a few little descants, and stuff you do for necessity. I was not writing big pieces. That's one thing I don't often see. If someone has any talent for writing at all, immediately they think, "I'm going to write some big splashy piece," and then think, "Now, who will publish this?" Don't worry about it. If it's worthwhile, if it's worth publishing, if it's worth a wider distribution, you will find somebody. But you don't start by looking at a publisher's catalog and say "What are they weak in? I'll write something to fit that." What you ought to be doing is concentrating on writing music for the forces that you have available. That makes so much more sense. However, it's not always going to ensure that you get published, because sometimes your forces are peculiar to your situation.⁵

The "Anthem" Should Be Liturgical

The bulk of the music which is in print is not designed for Lutheran liturgical worship, and in many ways is antithetical to the kind of thing you ought to be doing in a Lutheran service.⁶

[Instead,] music in the liturgy is indeed a proclaimer of the Word. Music is not just a mood setter or a tool to be used for a variety of other purposes. ... Proclaiming the good news of the Gospel means saying and singing

Don't start by looking at a publisher's catalog and say "What are they weak in? I'll write something to fit that." ... [Concentrate] on writing music for the forces that you have available.

explicitly of what God has done for us. It means telling the story of salvation in a way appropriate to the particular Sunday or festival. It does not mean saying or singing any kind of "religious" words, repeating moral platitudes, or voicing amorphous religious statements. It means telling the story of salvation. To put that into practice will necessitate a sea change in the repertoire of church choirs and congregations.⁷

Paul Bouman and I once did an all-day workshop at Concordia, Ann Arbor [MI]. For the last session we told people to bring 50 copies of something you have found to be very useful in your church, and we will have a reading session. Paul and I got in the car afterward and shook our heads: everything we'd said about what the choir should be doing in

worship was destroyed by the music that they brought. It was the music they felt their choirs really liked. There was no effort on their parts to say, "We need to help people experience things that maybe they haven't experienced and maybe learn to love them."⁸

The Hymn of the Day

Its purpose is to help focus on the central theme of the particular Sunday or festival of the church year being celebrated. ... As the *chief hymn* in the service, it reflects the central thrust of the proclamation for the day.⁹

Here's my thesis: If you have ten choices on any given Sunday, you've lost the idea of the effect of repetition and growing into that practice. One of the things that has contributed to this is the three-year lectionary. There's no way you're going to dislodge it. But you can have one single hymn of the day, such as "*Christ lag in Todesbanden*" for Easter—one



PHOTO COURTESY NANCY RAABE



Gospel motets have been a disaster from a publishing point of view. Yet they have a clear liturgical purpose. They must flow right out of the reading. “And Jesus said ...,” the choir stands and goes right into it.

hymn across the three years for a particular Sunday even though the Gospel lessons are different. I don't want to disjoin the tie between the Hymn of the Day and the Gospel lesson; I want to expand the concept of what the Gospel lesson is proclaiming to include all the lessons and to say, “Here is a hymn which encapsulates this day, and it will work for all three years.”¹⁰

Gospel Motets: Liturgical Music for Choir

[In 2012 Schalk completed a set of four-part motets set to excerpts from the Gospel readings for specific Sundays. It was a continuation of the long German tradition of *Evangelienmotetten* that Carlos Messerli describes as “the polyphonic setting of a text taken from the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John.”¹¹ Schalk

collected thirty-five of his original fifty into a spiral-bound collection that remains unpublished.]

If you look at the history, Gospel motets have been a disaster from a publishing point of view. Yet they have a clear liturgical purpose. They must flow right out of the reading. “And Jesus said ...,” the choir stands and goes right into it. Ideally what should eventually happen is that a congregation

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Quiz

Spoiler Alert: See the Quiz Questions on page 39 first!

Answers to Quiz

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Caroline Sandell Berg | “Children of the Heavenly Father” (text),
CW93 449, CW21 502, ELW 781, LSB 725 |
| Susan Palo Cherwien | “O Blessed Spring” (text), ELW 447, LSB 595 |
| Fanny Crosby | “Blessed Assurance” (text), ELW 638 |
| Marva Dawn | “Come Away from Rush and Hurry” (text), CW21 913 |
| Charlotte Elliott | “Just As I Am, without One Plea” (text),
CW93 397, CW21 814, ELW 592, LSB 570 |
| Kristyn Getty | “Oh, How Good It Is” (co-written with Keith Getty), CW21 731 |
| Katherine Hankey | “I Love to Tell the Story” (text),
CW93 562, CW21 746, ELW 661 |
| Frances Havergal | “Take My Life and Let It Be” (text), CW93 469,
CW21 695 and 696, ELW 583 and 685, LSB 783 and 784 |
| Anna Hoppe | “O Son of God, in Galilee” (text), CW21 765, LSB 841 |
| Karen Lafferty | “Seek Ye First” (text and tune), LSB 712 |
| Natalie Sleeth | “Hymn of Promise” (tune). CW21 913, “Come Away, from Rush
and Hurry,” sets Marva Dawn’s text to this tune. |
| Kathleen Thomerson | “I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light” (text and tune),
CW21 713, ELW 815, LSB 411 |
- d.** Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878
- b.** Amanda Husberg, 1940-2021
- a.** Gracia Grindal, b. 1943. A bit of a trick question! Grindal’s 1978 “Lo, How a Rose Is Growing” translation for *LBW* disappointed those who favored the poetic “blooming” over the more literal “growing.” Interestingly, the hymn text has returned to “rose is blooming” in *ELW* and *LSB*. By the way, Grindal has a blog about great hymns of faith, “Hymn for the Day,” hymnfortheday.com.
- False!** And the answer is not Katharina von Bora, Luther’s wife and helpmate. **Elizabeth Cruciger**, 1500-1535, wrote “*Herr Christ, der einig Gotts Sohn*” (“The Only Son from Heaven”), found in the exactly 500-year-old hymn collection *Enchiridion* (Erfurt: 1524) and in *CW93* 86, *CW21* 383, *ELW* 309, *LSB* 402.

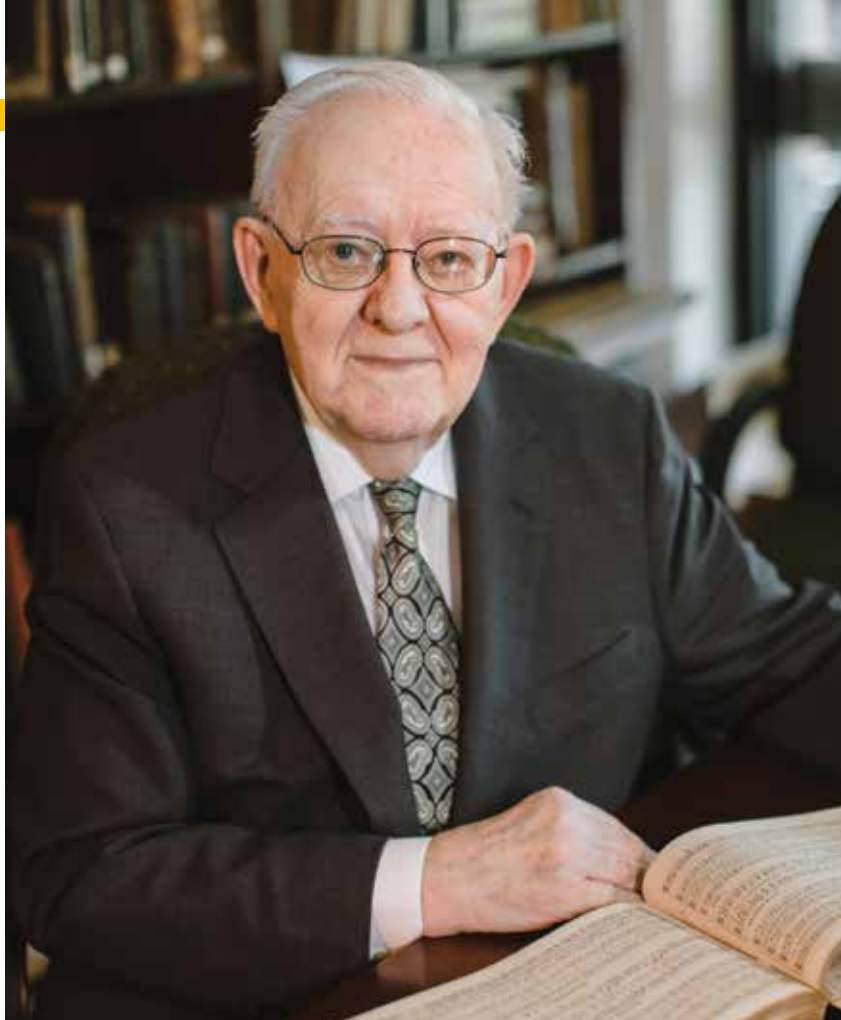
At the heart and center of that song is the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

should at some point be so used to the idea of a Gospel motet interrupting the readings, or repeated after the reading is completed, that they get so used to the idea that it isn't a novelty. And that can only happen if they are used more than infrequently. The one day where we [at Grace, River Forest, IL] do it every year is during the processional gospel on Palm Sunday: "and they cried out, 'Hosanna!'"¹²

All Staff Should Participate in Worship Planning

When Paul Bouman was in charge at Grace—I was his assistant from 1971 to 1997—sometimes he would direct and I would sing, or vice-versa. We always met together to plan the music with Dean Lueking [former pastor at Grace, River Forest]. He said, "Here's what I'm going to preach about," and we'd say, "How about this or that." It's so much better if everyone knows what is going on. Now, references from the pulpit to music are few and far between. There is such a rich connection that could be made if the staff worked together in this way.¹³

In worship we sing as a community of faith, joining together with angels, archangels, and all the company of heaven. It is a song sung by all the faithful who have gone before us, and a song that will continue after we are gone. It is a song that, in our own time and place, we are privileged to join. ... At the heart and center of that song is the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.¹⁴



Nancy Raabe is pastor at Grace Lutheran Church in Hatfield, PA, and president of ALCM.

Previously she served as music director at congregations in Wisconsin and Ohio. She has written a three-volume set of *One-Minute Devotions for the Church Musician* (St. Louis, MO: MorningStar, 2010-12) based on readings for all three lectionary cycles.

Photos pp. 42, 44, and 46: Tasha Schalk.
Photo p. 43: courtesy Nancy Raabe.

Endnotes

1. "The Church's Song: Proclamation, Pedagogy and Praise," in *Lutheran Service Book: Companion to the Hymns*, ed. Joseph Herl, Peter C. Reske, and Jon D. Vieker, vol. 2 (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 2019), 123.
2. Interview with the author, July 26, 2012.
3. Interview.
4. "The Church and the Composer," in Schalk's *Singing the Church's Song: Essays & Occasional Writings on Church Music* (Minneapolis, MN: Lutheran University Press, 2015), 224.
5. Interview.
6. Interview.
7. "Learning from the Past," in *Singing the Church's Song*, 124.
8. Interview.
9. *The Hymn of the Day and Its Use in Liturgical Worship*, Church Music Pamphlet Series (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1983), 5.
10. Interview.
11. Carlos Messerli, "Gospel Motet," in *Key Words in Church Music*, ed. Carl Schalk (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 2004), 273.
12. Interview.
13. Interview.
14. "The Church's Song," 123.



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